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STRATEGIC ATTACK: DEFINED AND REFINED

by

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Preface

Initiating a discussion on strategic attack draws strong, deeply-felt responses from military officers regardless of associations with service or weapon system. Depending on when you served, where you were assigned, and the missions for which you trained, you might have a perspective regarding the meaning and implications of strategic attack which differ from the perspectives of the next ten or fifteen people you meet. This disagreement among individuals also exists as disagreement between military services. Fortunately, the services have resolved to pursue a lasting solution to the problem. Joint Pub (JP) 3-70, *Joint Strategic Attack* is currently under development.

The task is to produce an acceptable framework for strategic attack--a mission that can fulfill Joint Pub 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* guidance to win wars quickly and with as few casualties as possible. Over the short term, this effort will truly help the planner who is asked to put together a strategic attack plan. Over the long term, this will really help our nation, since it brings the joint (and hopefully the coalition and interagency) community into agreement on a mission that focuses directly on war winning actions. The result will be the ability to plan for, and thereby capitalize on the potential of strategic attack. My hope is that this paper will assist that effort by describing a definition and presenting a process that is effective in its purpose, solid in its premise, and thorough enough in its logic that military officers will be able to speak of strategic attack with one voice and operations planners will have a clear understanding of how to proceed when directed to plan a “strategic attack.”

I would like to acknowledge the individuals who spent two months preparing for the working group session held at the Legends in Prattville on 8-12 April 2002 which ultimately arrived at the definition I describe in this paper. The panel was chaired by Maj Gen Dave Deptula. The distinguished members of the panel were as follows: LTG (ret) Steve Croker, MG (ret) Charles Link, Col Jim Callard, Col Mace Carpenter, Col Wade McRoberts, Col Jose Negron, Col Jon Noetzel, Col (ret) Phil Meilinger, Col (S) Gary Crowder, Col (S) Tom Ehrhard, Dr Chris Bowie, Mr Gary Endersby, Dr Ben Lambeth, Mr Gene Myers, Lt Col Russ Barnes, Lt Col Tom Himes, Lt Col Mike McKelvey, Lt Col John Sellers, Lt Col Scott Smith, Maj T. Beagle, Maj Mark Douglas, Maj Quentin Rideout, and Maj Darryl Stankevitz.

I would like to thank Dr Grant Hammond for his assistance in this effort. I was one of many making demands on his time, yet he spent hours helping me refine my focus and face the pitfalls. He challenged every premise and made sure that I asked and answered the “dirty” questions. I would also like to acknowledge Lt Col Frank Rossi and Lt Col JP Hunerwadel of the Air Force Doctrine Center for their research and discussion. They have been the ones on the hook to develop a Strategic Attack doctrine of which everyone will approve. I wish them the best of luck and the greatest success in their endeavor. Most importantly, I must acknowledge and thank my family for their support as I spent many hours researching and writing--time that most certainly would have been spent with them.

Abstract

This paper is aimed at bringing clarity to the chaos of strategic attack. The Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and a panel of four-star general officers approved a new definition for strategic attack at the Chief of Staff of the Air Forces' 2002 "Hap Arnold" Doctrine Symposium. The definition was developed by a panel of twenty-four experts who were selected based on backgrounds in strategic level thought and theory. The intent of this paper is to describe the rationale behind the new definition and offer a framework for applying it to real world operations.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The real target in war is the mind of the enemy commander, not the bodies of his troops.

—Sir Basil Liddell Hart

World War I “The War to End All Wars” commenced with the early initiation of a strategic attack by Germany against the French. The strategic attack failed and a lengthy war of attrition ensued that cost millions of lives and left such a strong impression on the people of that era that fifteen world leaders actually signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1928 renouncing war as an instrument of national policy.¹ Unfortunately, World War II proved that this vision of peace was an illusion and that war could not be outlawed through legislation. Therefore, if war was inevitable, perhaps the better way was to make wars “short and sharp” by coercing the enemy to give in as quickly and with as few casualties as possible.² Of course, finding a “better way” was no easy task. Since there are at least two sides in every fight, as one side found a better way to win, other sides found ways to counter that “better way.” The vicious cycle of technological evolution and improving strategies led to increasingly complex approaches to war--none of which guaranteed a quicker or less costly victory. In spite of the chaos, however, two things remained constant--the desire to avoid sequential and symmetric battles of attrition and the desire to win quickly with as few casualties as possible.

In part, this desire for a “better way” inspired continual efforts to characterize the elusive concept of strategic attack--efforts which produced a variety of perspectives based on local and specific situations and circumstances. For example, strategic attack was associated with aerial bombing in the 1930s; industrial web theory in the 1940s; and, alternatively, nuclear weapons, heavy bombers, or centers of gravity from the 1950s through the 1990s. In the end, strategic thinkers had no success with developing a definition able to stand the test of time. Even now, the military services are in violent disagreement on the issue of strategic attack as a joint mission.

A brief review of existing guidance will reveal that this lack of agreement is justified. Current definitions of strategic attack in service and joint doctrine documents are restrictive and limited in scope. They suffer from conceptual vagueness, internal inconsistencies, and a lack of applicability to real-world contingencies (Appendix A). There still exists confusion and misuse of the terms strategic and tactical and it is not yet clear to some that “strategic” does not equal nuclear, long-range, or bombing.

To resolve the wide variety of interpretations and representations, the 2002 Chief of Staff’s Doctrine Symposium included a Strategic Attack panel, which was tasked to forge an “actionable” definition of strategic attack. The agreed upon definition is the result of two months of preparation culminating in two days of intense deliberation and the subsequent endorsement (with minor modifications) by the Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and a panel of four-star Major Command commanders.³

To validate the concept, this paper uses historical examples to demonstrate how the official definition applies to strategic attack in action. The emphasis is not on how to win wars or even whether strategic attacks *can* win wars. Consideration *is* given to the assumption that influence and/or force leads to victory in war; and that carefully planned and executed strategic

attacks contribute directly to the effectiveness of these “war-winning” concepts; however, numerous books and papers discuss the pros and cons of that argument, so it won’t be debated here.⁴ The emphasis of this paper is on explaining the official definition of strategic attack, describing strategic attack as a joint mission, and expressing a procedure for planning and executing a strategic attack. The suggested procedure is intended to help the planner develop a sequence of actions aimed at attacking the right things at the right time to overcome the resistance of the adversary--and, if initial actions fail to achieve planned objectives, to make adjustments quickly and accurately. The first step, naturally, is to gain an in-depth understanding of the definition.

Chapter 2

Definition

If I always appear prepared, it is because before entering on an undertaking, I have meditated for long and have foreseen what may occur. It is not genius which reveals to me suddenly and secretly what I should do in circumstances unexpected by others; it is thought and preparation.

—Napoleon

The twenty-four person panel approached the task of defining strategic attack by developing specific evaluation criteria over a two month period preceding the symposium. The criteria demanded a clear and concise definition, distinguishable from other missions, supported by experience and theory, useful, and effective in the Air Force, Joint, and National Security communities. Only time will tell if the committee succeeded, but by the conclusion of the symposium the group was content that the twenty-eight words⁵ chosen to represent the concept of strategic attack completely satisfied the pre-determined evaluation criteria.

The definition arrived at by the panel members is as follows: Strategic attack is offensive action conducted by command authorities aimed at generating effects that most directly achieve national security objectives by affecting an adversary's leadership, conflict-sustaining resources, and/or strategy.⁶

Each phrase of the strategic attack definition was heavily debated, heatedly discussed, and carefully crafted. These phrases are not expressed as absolutes because, despite all efforts to

provide structure, warfighting is still an art. The next few paragraphs will present the intent behind each phrase and its applicability to the overall concept.

The first phrase “Offensive action” says that strategic attack is proactive and aggressive. It establishes that strategic attack is inclusive of all elements of military power, such as strike operations, psychological operations, special operations, and information operations.

The phrase “by command authorities” says that strategic attacks are planned in support of the *joint force commander’s* objectives which, in turn, are specifically tailored to meet the objectives set out by the President and Secretary of Defense. “Command authorities” is intended to mean a general officer, such as a combatant commander or a joint force commander (JFC).

The third significant phrase “aimed at” implies *intent* and indicates that analysis and planning is required. Not every strategic attack will succeed and actions that arbitrarily create strategic effects cannot be described, after the fact, as a strategic attack. A strategic attack flows from a plan designed to accomplish a premeditated objective; yet, sometimes political/diplomatic constraints may affect strategic attack operations. Additionally, “aimed at” acknowledges that strategic response options available to the adversary may derail the best of plans.

The phrase “generating effects” highlights the fact that the objective, not the type of weapon used or delivery system employed, constitutes a strategic attack. Effects-based means that military actions, such as operations, targeting, or strategy, are designed to produce distinctive and desired results.⁷ Commanders should employ strategic attack with a focus on creating effects that influence or force the adversary to comply with stated objectives. Effects-based planning and execution should demonstrate clear relationships between the strategic objectives of the President; the effects that achieve those objectives; and the military operations

that produce the desired effects. Well-planned strategic attacks account for the fact that effects occur at all levels of war and may generate strategic responses by the adversary.

The phrase “most directly” captures the essence of strategic attack and is a key discriminator between strategic attack and other missions. This phrase describes what strategic attack *is not*, almost as much as it tells you what it *is*. Attrition warfare cannot constitute a strategic attack. Attrition strategy is a viable approach to war and has a definite potential to be successful; however, it is possibly the most difficult and costly struggle within which one can engage. In the opening speech from the movie *Patton*, George C. Scott expressed it well when he said, “No [soldier] ever won a war by dying for his country. He won it by making the other poor dumb [soldier] die for *his* country.”⁸ From the aircentric perspective, the close air support and interdiction missions differ from strategic attack in that the former are focused on influencing the outcome of troops in contact—winning the decisive engagement in the close battle. By definition these are supporting roles and cannot meet the criteria of “most directly.”

“Achieving national security objectives” is the phrase that represents the unique contribution of strategic attack. An objective is the clearly defined, decisive, and attainable goal toward which every military operation should be directed.⁹ The President, the Secretary of Defense, and their advisors determine national security objectives. Clausewitz says, “in war the political object is the goal.”¹⁰ Within the strategic attack definition, the term “national security objectives” represents that political object.

National security objectives are situation specific, but are not always aimed at achieving the instantaneous “knockout blow” of Giulio Douhet’s famous vision. While the knockout blow is attractive to the military and supported by Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, ideally, strategic attack will aid the use of other instruments of power. The more

practical national security objectives are goals that achieve transforming consequences (i.e. those outcomes that completely change the direction of the war).

Planners must always fight for clarification regarding the national security objectives. There may be short, medium, and long-term national security objectives and the military must be ready, when called, to support them all. Of course, not everything done in support of national security objectives will be a strategic attack, but planners must always be alert to opportunities for executing strategic attacks that will result in quicker, less costly victories.

The final phrase “affecting adversary leadership...resources...strategy” identifies *how* to accomplish strategic attack by giving a specific targeting focus. It acknowledges that strategic attack may include preemptive strikes, destruction of industrial targets, closure of an adversary’s bank accounts, and myriad other targets. It is narrow enough to provide clear guidance to the current combat planner, yet broad enough to subsume the employment of emerging offensive capabilities against adversaries that have yet to be identified (i.e. stand the test of time). It provides a framework for envisioning ways to organize, train, and equip for the “next war.”

In conclusion, this definition clearly shows that strategic attack functions on two levels—national/strategic and operational. Depending on which word is emphasized, the term itself expresses a two-level concept. “Strategic *attack*” underscores the *aggressive action* needed to achieve the appropriate effect--typically planned at the operational level; while “*strategic* attack” refers to the execution of a plan *cleverly devised* to surprise the enemy--typically attempted at the national/strategic level. For the purposes of this paper, the operational level is defined as that level of war at which campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted, and sustained; and the strategic level is that level of war at which a nation determines national security objectives.¹¹

The definition also complies with the dual guidance of JP 3-0 by addressing the issues of winning quickly with the “knockout blow” and executing strategic campaigns of a more protracted nature. “JFCs conduct sustained operations when a quick military resolution is not possible. Some functions (e.g., strategic attack, interdiction, and psychological operations) continue throughout the conflict, to deny the adversary sanctuary, freedom of action, or informational advantage.”¹² The applications and implications of the definition, within this context, will be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Application/Implications

To win battles you do not beat weapons -- you beat the soul of man, of the enemy man. Decide what will hurt the enemy most within the limits of your capabilities to harm him and then do it.

—Gen George S. Patton

The successful application of strategic attack, whether at the national/strategic or operational level, is critically dependent on intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination.¹³ It is an understanding of this relationship that will provide the United States military with the vision to effectively plan strategic attacks--regardless of the structure, capability, or objectives of the adversary. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the two levels of strategic attack. The purpose is to show the synergy between actions conducted at the national/strategic level and those conducted at the operational level. It seeks to convey that at each point of “success” or “failure” an adaptation must take place, which can only be done effectively if the appropriate intelligence has been collected, analyzed, and made available to the strategic attack planner.

The starting point in Figure 1 is at the upper right of the diagram in the national/strategic circle. If there are vulnerabilities at the national/strategic level that might result in “quick victory,” the planner should create a plan against the vulnerability most suitable for a strategic attack. Upon execution, feedback regarding success or failure (result) will be clear because the objective of the effort is the immediate and unconditional surrender of the adversary. This is

obviously a long shot--and well worth the effort if it succeeds, but it should never be the only option. Naturally, in the event of a successful effort, the planner must be ready to offer suggestions for securing the peace (i.e. terms of surrender). OPERATION ALLIED FORCE was planned with no consideration for follow on operations in the event of failure. Lieutenant Colonel Alan J. Stephenson in his award winning essay, “Shades of Gray: Gradual Escalation and Coercive Diplomacy” says, “It was unacceptable for NATO leaders to rely completely on a limited 3-day air plan to bring about desired results without preliminary approval of subsequent military actions in case of failure.”¹⁴ Anticipating the possibility that the plan could fail, the planner should be prepared to adapt.

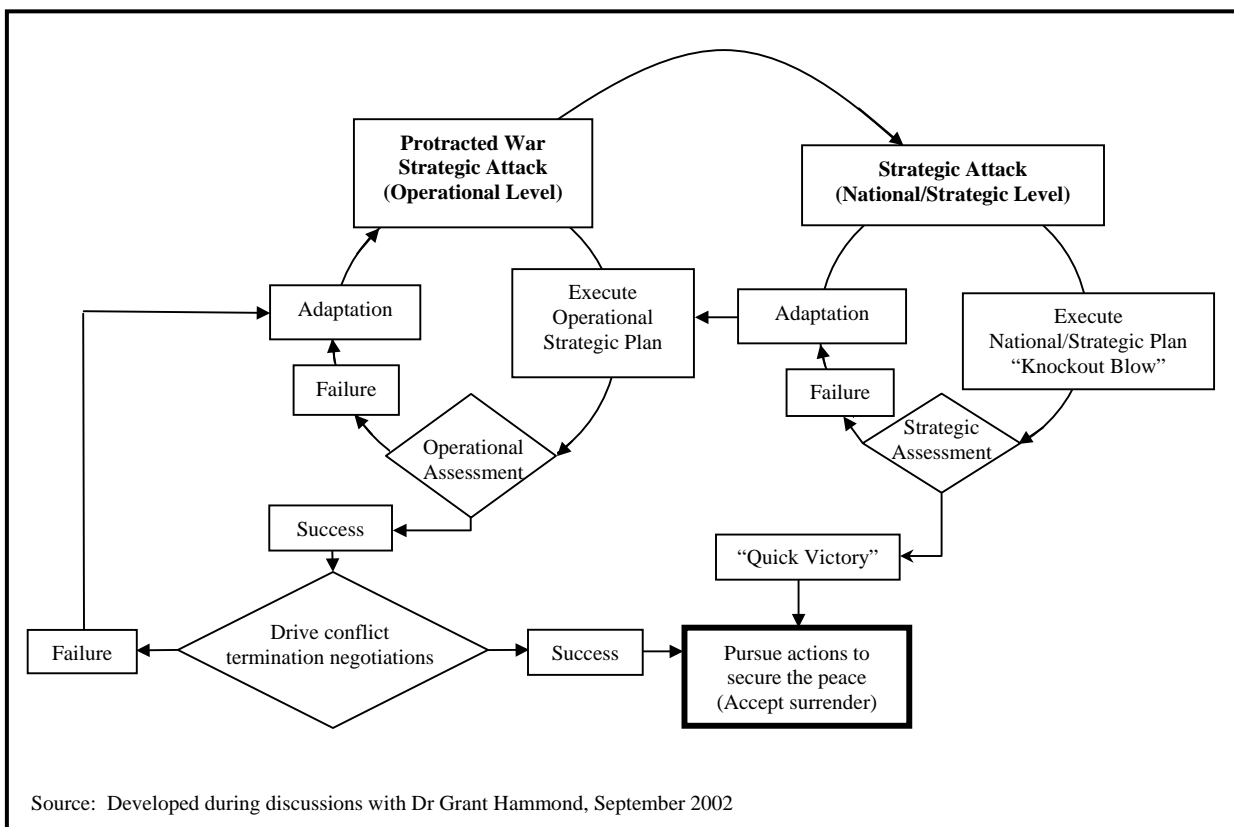


Figure 1. Strategic Attack - National/Strategic & Operational Relationship

That adaptation entails a transition from the national/strategic circle to the operational circle with an immediate execution of the operational level plan. This plan should already be in place having been developed in conjunction with the national/strategic plan. On this side of the diagram, battle damage assessments will indicate progress, however, it is *expected* that this effort will take longer to achieve the desired effects and may require significantly more adaptations. This next step is critical. Should developments indicate that the enemy has been overcome, *one cannot simply accept the fact that the war is over*--this is the time to drive conflict termination negotiations and make sure the adversary complies with demands. If the adversary decides the demands are too high he/she may resume the fight, requiring yet more adaptation. If the adversary agrees to the demands, then the time has come to take actions to secure the peace (i.e. terms of surrender). During Operation ALLIED FORCE, General Wesley Clark insisted on maintaining pressure on President Milosevic, even while negotiations were going on, to ensure the implementation of the agreed upon settlement.¹⁵ Figure 1 is admittedly a static way of depicting the strategic attack environment and, in practice, there may not be a clean, clear point of transition from the national/strategic to the operational. In fact, various aspects of this construct may be engaged simultaneously as actions “ebb and flow” between “circles.” To keep track of this ebb and flow, it will be helpful to recognize the important, although not necessarily distinct, differences between the focus at the operational level and the focus at the national/strategic level. Table 1 indicates some of these differences.

Table 1, Focus of Operational and National/Strategic Level Strategic Attack

Factors	Operational Focus	National/Strategic Focus
Decision authority	JFC or lower decision making authority	Chairman, Joint Chiefs or higher
Operational scenario	Protracted war	Knockout blow
Military plan	Campaign	Strikes, Raids
Termination	Cumulative effects	Rapid and Decisive Conclusion
Time	Extended	Quick

The table shows that at the operational level, the battle is fought between general officers, typically in the form of a campaign; however, political leaders may levy constraints on employment options in a protracted war. “Battles” at the national/strategic level are fought between the minds of opposing leaders.¹⁶ It is important that strategic attacks at this level are planned to result in rapid military victory in order to aid negotiations, as necessary. In these circumstances, planners must bear in mind that the “knockout blow” option may not be available and even when it is available, it may not succeed. Therefore, planners should simultaneously develop strategic attacks against targets that destroy the adversary’s ability to maintain long-term operations. These include the traditional “conflict-sustaining” type targets that eventually result in crushing the enemy’s capability to resist. Yet, just because the “knockout blow” does not draw expected effects within the anticipated time frame does not mean it is not simmering and smoldering in the background, contributing to the cumulative effect of follow on actions, and lending itself to eventual victory.

“Attacking” does include a physical dimension and all physical acts occur at the tactical level of war. The tactical level is where battles, engagements, missions, and sorties constitute the environment of the soldier and the airman. Strategic attack encompasses the tactical attack. Strategic effects are typically achieved through the cumulative result of tactical/operational actions, but a direct attack on a specific target, such as an irreplaceable commander or a critical headquarters, could also produce strategic effects.

Two key differences between the operational level and the national/strategic level, as noted in the table, are decision authority and time. Predetermined indicators should reveal when the initial national/strategic plan has not achieved “rapid” success, prompting any presidential decision to commence execution of the operational level strategic attack plan. In the United

States, the President is also the decision authority for certain specific actions such as preventive or preemptive strikes. Once a war devolves to the operational level, a Joint Force Commander or designated subordinate has the latitude to make execution decisions as long as they fall within the purview of Presidential guidance for achieving national security objectives.

Time considerations at the national/strategic level and the operational level play different, yet equally important roles, which must be placed in the proper perspective. At the national/strategic level, the time criterion is to win “quickly,” but quickly could mean one year as opposed to two. Clausewitz wrote in *On War*, “[e]very action needs a certain time to be completed.”¹⁷ Speed, on the contrary--defined by Merriam Webster as the act or state of moving swiftly, is *not* the most important element in strategic attack at any level. “In World War II, both Japan and Germany based their tactical, operational, and strategic war plans on speed; when compelled into longer fights, they lost.”¹⁸ At the operational level, achieving a successful outcome is expected to take an extended period of time.

Exploring the applications and implications of the new strategic attack definition is simply an interesting exercise until validated through historical precedence. Assuming that strategic attacks are not a new phenomenon, there should be instances where they have occurred in the past--even if at the time they were not described as strategic attacks. For the purposes of this paper, a *distinction* between “strategy” and “strategic attack” is important. It frames the context for proper analysis of these historical accounts. As presented here, strategy is the **art and science** of developing and employing armed forces and other instruments of national power to secure national or multinational objectives.¹⁹ Strategic attack focuses on **military action** intended to influence or force the enemy to surrender. The next chapter will outline a few operations representative of strategic attack complete with analyses based on the new definition.

Chapter 4

Historical Underpinnings

A wise man learns from his experience; a wiser man learns from the experiences of others.

—Confucius

Strategic attack has a solid foundation in history. At first glance it may appear that most attempts at executing strategic attacks have been unsuccessful, but typically, it is the unsuccessful campaign that is dissected *ad infinitum* in hopes of learning from the mistakes of others. Additionally, short wars resulting from successful strategic attacks leave little information from which to draw warfighting concepts. This chapter will look at historical accounts of successful and unsuccessful strategic attacks that have been conducted at the operational level (2) and at the national/strategic level (4). Examples will include surface, air, and joint operations scenarios.

Operational – Surface (Joint) –The Inchon Invasion (1950)

General MacArthur planned an amphibious landing at Inchon (offensive action) aimed at relieving pressure on the Pusan perimeter (generating effects) to most directly seize the initiative from the enemy (national security objective) by cutting Communist supply lines (affecting conflict-sustaining resources).

On 21 August 1950, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Forrest P. Sherman and Army Chief of Staff General J. Lawton Collins flew to Tokyo to represent the Joint Chiefs of Staff in

meetings with General of the Army Douglas MacArthur and other Pacific area and Korean War commanders. On the agenda was General MacArthur's plan to reverse the tide of the conflict with an amphibious landing at Inchon, Seoul's port city.²⁰ Inchon was a tactically challenging amphibious target, with long approaches through shallow channels, poor beaches and a tidal range that restricted landing operations to a few hours a day. It took all of MacArthur's unparalleled powers of persuasion to sell his concept to doubting Army, Navy and Marine Corps commanders.

Preliminary naval gunfire and air bombardment began on 13 September 1950. Over the next several days, as supplies and troops poured ashore at Inchon, the Marines moved relentlessly toward Seoul. On 16 September, the Pusan perimeter's defenders went on the offensive. After resisting for a few days, the now-isolated North Korean army retreated and progressively collapsed. On the 27th, United States Army units moving southwards from Seoul met those coming up from Pusan. On 29 September, Seoul was returned to the South Korean government.²¹ The strategic attack had a transforming consequence that was such a surprise the North Koreans were unable to conceive an appropriate strategic response.

Operational – Surface/Air (Joint) – Six-Day War (1967)

The Israelis launched a surprise attack (offensive action) aimed at seizing the initiative from the military alliance of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan (generating effects) to most directly defend Israel from a coordinated attack (national security objective) by preemptively striking Egypt in the south, followed by a counterattack against Jordan in the east and the routing of Syrian forces entrenched on the Golan Heights in the north (affecting strategy).

When Egypt moved large numbers of troops into the Sinai desert in May 1967; ordered the UN peacekeeping forces, deployed since 1957 out of the area; reimposed the blockade of the

Straits of Tiran; and entered into a military alliance with Jordan; Israel found itself faced with hostile Arab armies on all fronts. As Egypt had violated the arrangements agreed upon following the 1956 Sinai Campaign, Israel invoked its inherent right of self-defense, launching a preemptive strike on 5 June 1967.

At the end of six days of fighting, Judea, Samaria, Gaza, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights were under Israel's control.²² Israel's small but elite air force dominated the Six Day War of June 1967, pulling off one of the most successful surprise attacks of all time. The Israeli Air Force (IAF) smashed the air forces of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Thereafter, the Egyptian, Syrian, and Jordanian armies were routed in the Sinai, Golan Heights, and West Bank.²³ The masterful coordination of the strategic attack put the Arab nations on the defensive leaving them little time to coordinate a strategic response.

National/Strategic – Surface –Schlieffen Plan (1914)

Alfred von Schlieffen's plan was to encircle the French army (offensive action) and eliminate France as an adversary (effect) to most directly avoid a two-front war (national security objective) by annihilating the ground troops (affecting conflict-sustaining resources).

The actual strategic attack was a knockout blow aimed at the rapid and total overthrow of the French army. "Time was not on Germany's side in a two-front war, and it was essential to destroy one enemy at the outset. This could not be achieved by a frontal assault, which at best would produce an "ordinary" victory followed by a protracted war. A battle of annihilation was required."²⁴ By defeating France, [von Schlieffen] hoped to contain Great Britain and Russia. Schlieffen's strategy aimed at a quick decision that developed from the "right" operational approach. "Quick," in this instance, was defined as eliminating the French threat before Russia had time to complete mobilization.²⁵ Although his great project for gaining a rapid and decisive

victory against France came close to success in 1914,²⁶ it did not accurately anticipate the French strategic response and failed.

National/Strategic – Air – Pearl Harbor attack (1941)

The Japanese conducted a bombing raid (offensive action) aimed at keeping the United States out of the war for at least one year (generating effects) to gain time for building military strength and securing control of the Pacific (national security objectives) by destroying the United States Pacific Fleet (affecting leadership and conflict-sustaining resources).

Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto realized that Japan could not win a long war against the United States and calculated that a year or more would be needed for full American mobilization following an attack on the Pacific Fleet. He anticipated that by the time new ship reinforcements arrived at Pearl Harbor the Japanese perimeter would be strong enough to deter or repel attempts at penetration. On Sunday morning, December 7, 1941 at 7:55 A.M. local time, the Japanese Imperial Navy attacked Pearl Harbor. There had been no formal declaration of war. Fortunately for the United States, over half the Pacific Fleet was out to sea, including the carriers.²⁷ Unfortunately for the Japanese, the failure to destroy the entire Pacific Fleet, and the surprise nature of the attack--which enraged the American population--provided means and motive for the United States to enter World War II. Japanese leaders did not anticipate this strategic response and had no alternative strategy.²⁸ The Pearl Harbor attack shows how a strategic attack, intended to be a ‘silver bullet’ at the national/strategic level, *can* fail.

National/Strategic – Air (Joint) – Eldorado Canyon (1986)

The United States conducted a bombing raid (offensive action) aimed at providing Muammar Qadhafi “with incentives and reasons to alter his criminal behavior”²⁹ (effect) to most

directly defend against the export of terrorism (national security objective) by striking Qadhafi's terrorist training camps (affecting leadership and conflict-sustaining resources).

On 15 April, the United States launched a series of military air strikes against ground targets inside Libya. Four of the five targets, selected at the National Security Council level within the circle of the President's advisors, were chosen because of their direct connection to terrorist activity. The timing of the attack was such that while strike aircraft were still in the air President Reagan was able to address much of the world. He emphasized that this action was a matter of United States self defense against Libya's state-sponsored terrorism.

The use of force was prompted by "irrefutable proof" that Libya had directed the terrorist bombing of a West Berlin discotheque. The impetus for the President's decision to authorize the raid was the American intelligence interception of a message from Qadhafi ordering an attack on Americans "to cause maximum and indiscriminate casualties."³⁰

Although retaliation for the Berlin bombing had been anticipated, Libyan air defenses were caught by surprise. In fact, it was reported that antiaircraft fire had not begun until after the American planes had passed over their targets at Tripoli. Despite all warnings, Muammar Qadhafi was completely unprepared to execute a strategic response to the Eldorado Canyon raid.

National/Strategic – Preventive – Israeli attack on Osirak Reactor (1981)

Israel conducted a raid (offensive action) aimed at denying Iraq a nuclear weapons capability (effect) to most directly protect Israel against the threat of nuclear attack (national security objective) by destroying the Osirak reactor (affecting conflict-sustaining resource).

In 1981, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin watched apprehensively as Saddam Hussein's Iraq appeared to be nearing nuclear weapons capability. The centerpiece of the Iraqi effort was the French-built Osirak nuclear reactor. The Israelis sought help from French

President Mitterand to use diplomatic efforts to head off Iraqi nuclear capability but believed that military action would be necessary to prevent Iraq from developing a nuclear weapon. The Israelis determined that a raid was the only acceptable solution and would have to occur before the reactor went “hot” so as not to endanger the surrounding community. On June 7, 1981, F-15 and F-16 aircraft of the Israeli Air Force (IAF) attacked the Osirak reactor. After a tense but uneventful low-level approach, the fighters popped up, identified the dome of the reactor and delivered their weapons. Iraqi air defenses had been taken totally by surprise. It took only one minute and twenty seconds for the reactor to be reduced to ruins. IAF Commander, Maj Gen David Ivry, had orchestrated a successful preemption raid.³¹

These few examples do not demonstrate the full range of actions available within the sphere of strategic attack, but do delineate some of the boundaries and limitations associated with the new definition. They exhibit the transforming consequences of strategic attack, highlighting surprise as a key element. Additionally, they validate strategic attack as a significant component of campaign plans, provide evidence of strategic attack as a joint mission, and demonstrate the strategic value of strikes and raids. Vital to the outcome of these scenarios is the amount of effort placed on knowing the adversary, understanding his/her value set, and developing creative ways to take advantage of vulnerabilities. These accounts also show that failure to anticipate potential strategic responses may have dire consequences. On the other hand, if events do occur as planned, then the result will be a short war, which fulfills the guidance of joint doctrine to “win quickly and with as few casualties as possible.”³²

Theory and history are helpful for understanding the concept of strategic attack, but they are not enough. To make strategic attack “actionable” requires an approach. The next chapter offers an approach based on earlier discussions of the definition, theory, and historical accounts.

Chapter 5

Planning a Strategic Attack

When blows are planned, whoever contrives them with the greatest appreciation of their consequences will have a great advantage.

—Frederick the Great

Strategic attack has suffered neglect and misuse because planners have lacked guidance on how to turn the philosophy of strategic attack into action and results. In Chapter 2, the seven key phrases that constitute the new definition were identified and explained. Using those phrases to develop a planning process yields the following five steps:

- Step 1.** Request clear direction from *command authorities* regarding *national security objectives*.

Step 2. Determine what *effects* are necessary to meet the stated national security objectives.

Step 3. Identify the adversary's vulnerabilities in *leadership, conflict-sustaining resources, and/or strategy*

Step 4. Plan an *offensive action* that has the potential to achieve results significantly greater than the effort expended (*most direct*).

Step 5. Realize strategic attack plans may not achieve desired results within the expected time frames and develop branches and sequels. (*aimed at*)

Figure 2. Strategic Attack Planning Process

Step 1. The planner must first obtain clear direction from *command authorities* regarding *national security objectives*. The political object, as determined by the President, should be translated by the Joint Force Commander or representative and provided to the planner. The

planner can then relate political goals, within the context of the strategic environment, to the military objective--thus, the strategic attack can be aimed at achieving a specific result--getting the adversary to comply with explicit demands. In some cases, the planners may have to provide objectives, to which the Commander-in-Chief can subscribe, in order to initiate and/or provide timely action.

Step 2. Determine what *effects* are necessary to meet the stated national security objectives.

Planning a strategic attack will require planners to first ask *WHY* and then identify *WHAT* needs to be done (Appendix B). This means gaining a solid understanding of the strategic environment. With some basic framework of the “why,” the planner must decide “what” can be done to prevent the adversary from successfully influencing or forcing United States leadership to “do or stop doing” and decide how the United States can get the adversary to “do or stop doing.” Once the planner understands what the strategic attack is supposed to accomplish, he/she can focus on accomplishing it. Strategic attacks must be mounted against all fronts--political, military, economic, social, informational, and intelligence. Thwarting an adversary’s initial strike might expose an opportunity for a war-winning counterstrike; and countering a strategic response might have the added value of breaking the enemy’s will to fight.

Step 3. Identify the adversary’s vulnerabilities in *leadership, conflict-sustaining resources, and/or strategy*. Success in this step depends on exploiting every available intelligence source to identify those things that are of most value to the adversary. Gathering information on the adversary is critical to putting together a focused series of actions designed to get to the heart of the adversary’s warfighting program. Planners must be intimately familiar with enemy personnel, explore the adversary’s strategic options, consider potential actions, and anticipate future moves. Other areas that bear analysis include: *objectives* – what does the adversary want

us to do or stop doing; *strategy* – how does the adversary plan to influence or force us to do or stop doing; *capability* – what resources does the adversary have to influence or force us to do or stop doing; *resolve* – how far is the adversary willing to go to influence or force us to do or stop doing; and *commitment* – what is at stake for the adversary. With this information the planner can determine whether the “knockout blow” is even an option or whether he/she needs to look at longer term solutions.

Step 4. Plan an *offensive action* that has the potential to achieve results significantly greater than the effort expended (*most direct*). Offensive actions should be proactive and aggressive. Strikes or raids using the element of surprise should be the first option for dealing the knockout blow. Beyond that, the planners should be looking for actions designed to take the initiative. Once it is clear regarding what needs to be done, the planner can identify the set of targets to be attacked. Some of these targets may not be suitable for physical destruction, since strategic attack is not limited to airpower or bombing, but they may be vulnerable to other types of offensive action such as information operations, psychological operations, and/or special operations. Using the accomplishment of national security objectives as the goal, a planner can select from a number of models—centers of gravity, five rings, net elements of value, effects based operations, network centric warfare, etc., to develop courses of action (Appendix C).

One approach might be to have sub groups, within the planning cell, each analyze the adversary using different models. They could then compare results, looking for common occurrences between methodologies. For example, a portion of the planning cell (2-3 people) could draw on Dr Joe Strange’s construct to identify Center(s) of Gravity, Critical Capabilities, Critical Vulnerabilities and Critical Requirements. A separate sub group, similarly sized, might use Col John Warden’s Five Ring Construct or Major Jason Barlow’s Net Elements of Value to

identify potential target sets. In order for this idea to work, members assigned to these planning cells must be trained to use the full gamut of analytical planning processes.

Step 5. Realize strategic attack plans may not achieve desired results within the expected time frame and develop branches and sequels (*aimed at*). Assessment is a vital component of strategic attack. It is very difficult to do, but is critical to successfully achieving national security objectives. Strategic attack will require a strategic assessment and an operational assessment. The strategic assessment will reveal whether the overall strategy is working and how well the strategic objectives are being met. This appraisal of strategic-level effects *on both sides* provides a basis for high-level decisions on military and political strategy. Operational assessment determines whether force employment is properly supporting overall strategy by meeting operational objectives.

The execution phase of a strategic attack will require a continuous monitoring process to ascertain effectiveness. Analysts will have to scan for incremental, perhaps barely perceptible changes in the adversary's operational habits. They will have to watch for what is *not* happening as well as for what *is* happening. They will have to be patient. Given the nature of the objective, assessment at the national/strategic level should be easier to accomplish because a successful knockout blow gains the immediate and unconditional surrender of the adversary. That result will be indisputable. If the adversary does not capitulate quickly and completely, however, all is not lost. Those initial actions may still contribute to the long-term cumulative effect, leading to eventual victory. If research reveals, given the nature of the adversary, that the "knockout blow," is not an option, the planner must inform the Joint Force Commander and offer alternate strategic attack options. Strategic attack at the operational level must continue to counter enemy

actions while systematically draining critical resources until the adversary agrees to cease hostile action and negotiate a settlement. One key to victory in a protracted war is unrelenting pressure.

The following example represents components described in this chapter regarding the planning and execution of a strategic attack. It shows how identification of national security objectives contributed to the development of an offensive action that affected leadership, strategy, and conflict-sustaining resources. It illustrates the value of gathering intelligence to obtain a clear picture of the strategic environment and it exemplifies an effects-based approach through which command authorities effectively anticipated potential strategic responses and made appropriate adaptations.

Example of Strategic Attack Planning and Execution – Bekaa Valley (1982)

In April 1981, Syria deployed its first Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) brigades to the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon. Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) forces in southern Lebanon had become part of an escalating cross-border conflict with Israeli settlements. This posed significant problems for Israel since it was obligated to remove troops from the Sinai by 1982 in order to comply with provisions in the 1979 Camp David Accords. Operation Peace for Galilee aimed at having Israeli ground forces push into Lebanon to keep Syria at bay, while Lebanese Christian militiamen drove out the PLO. Maj Gen David Ivry and his headquarters staff at the Tel Aviv command post were watching Syria closely. One major concern was trying to "avoid any war with Syria." Israeli ground forces needed continued air support, but SAMs in the Bekaa Valley restricted the Israeli Air Force's ability to conduct reconnaissance and to provide air cover for ground operations. According to Ivry, the political situation was "very delicate."

In June, Israeli remotely piloted vehicles spotted an additional five SA-6s moving from the Golan Heights into the Bekaa Valley. The Israelis interpreted this move as a signal that Syria had no intention of becoming involved in a major war. If Syria were anticipating war, the SAMs would have been positioned to defend the approach to Damascus, instead of going north and reinforcing the Bekaa Valley. The redeployment suggested that the Israelis could strike the SAM sites without drawing Syria into a wider war while achieving the goal of eliminating the SAM defenses from Lebanon.

Prior to the war, Israeli drones tested out the radar and communications frequencies of the SAM batteries. Ivry recalled, "[Our] intelligence-gathering effort was an enormous one." The plan had been well rehearsed. Aircrews practiced attack runs against dummy SAM sites in Israel's Negev desert for

months before the operation. The IAF conducted mock jamming of fighter and ground communications in order to undercut centralized control of the air defense. "The ability to disrupt the SAM batteries had a major impact strategically," Ivry noted. The plan was to launch the attack at noon on 9 June 1981, but the IAF had to wait for Israel's cabinet to approve the raid.

Operations in the Bekaa Valley underscored the value of electronic warfare and the benefits of coordination and careful planning. Ivry's role in coping with unexpected SAM batteries and altering attack plans in real time showed that success in air warfare rested on skillful execution in the heat of battle as well as prior planning.

For Israel, the Bekaa Valley air war established a strong deterrent against Syria. It also helped the IAF regain balance within Israel's armed forces. Yet the Bekaa Valley air war also helped drive Middle East strategy in a new direction. Potential opponents started to look for new weapons, since challenging the IAF in the skies was deemed pointless. In Moscow, the Bekaa Valley operation threw military men into a kind of shock. Top Soviet systems had been trounced. On a visit to Czechoslovakia in 1991, Ivry met a Czech general who had been serving in Moscow in 1982. He told Ivry that the Bekaa Valley air war made the Soviets understand that Western technology was superior to theirs, and in this Czech general's view, the blow to the Bekaa Valley SAMs was part of the cascade of events leading to the collapse of the Soviet Union.³³

This scenario represents one version of strategic attack. It portrays a fair representation of elements described in the definition. It contains an effective analysis of the strategic environment and includes a political dimension, which provided a national security objective translated into a military objective. Simulations were conducted to ensure the expected effects could be achieved, and mission execution was monitored and assessed for necessary adaptations. This operation was successful at the operational level, yet had extraordinary, although unanticipated, repercussions at the national/strategic levels.

There are undoubtedly numerous ways to plan a strategic attack. This proposal offers one approach which some may find acceptable while others see a starting point for further discussion. In the interest of developing a robust strategic attack capability, however, it is important that those discussions occur, as necessary. On that note, the final chapter presents a few closing thoughts.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Loss of hope, rather than loss of life, is the factor that really decides wars, battles, and even the smallest combats. The all-time experience of warfare shows that when men reach the point where they can see, or feel, that further effort and sacrifice can do no more than delay the end, they commonly lose the will to spin it out and bow to the inevitable.

—Sir B.H. Liddell Hart

At present, it is difficult to resolve disagreements on strategic attack. Those with strongly held perspectives are supported by a basis in fact depending on the time frame, weapons system, or theater of operations with which they were associated. These perspectives also reflect differing representations of strategic attack contained in doctrine, regulations, instructions, and legal documents. A significant point of contention seems to stem from attempts to discuss, as a single concept, something that functions on two levels--national/strategic and operational.

A clear understanding of the duality of strategic attack, as described in this paper, permits responsible parties to recognize which mechanisms are appropriate to the circumstances. The Joint Force Commander typically focuses on the development of a strategic attack at the national/strategic level. Realizing that a knockout blow may not be possible or advisable, strategic attacks at this level should still be aimed at meeting the intent of JP 3-0 to “win quickly.” The goal should be to develop plans focused on most directly influencing or forcing the leader, *who has the authority*, to order the cessation of hostile and objectionable behavior. Operational level commanders, such as the Joint Force Air Component Commander, Joint Force

Land Component Commander, Joint Force Maritime Component Commander, and Joint Force Special Operations Component Commander have the authority to execute strategic attacks at the operational level, realizing that strategic attacks can be performed by individual service components, but may be more effective if conducted synergistically.

Understanding the concept of strategic attack allows one to separate what strategic attack is from how it is done. It becomes easier to distinguish between the objectives and the tools. For example, centers of gravity (COG) represent a concept that is useful for planning a strategic attack, but it is not integral to the *definition* of strategic attack. Effects Based Operations, Network Centric Warfare, Boyd's OODA Loop theory, Strategic Rings, Net Elements of Value, Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (IPB), and Predictive Battlespace Awareness (PBA) are all tools that support the development of strategic attack plans.

Knowing the purpose of strategic attack on both levels enables leaders to evaluate courses of action based on appropriate criteria. Decision makers can ask the question: "How does this strategic attack plan achieve the stated objective of...? Having strategic attack criteria means planners need no longer ask, "What is a COG?" or "Is that really a COG?" They might ask instead, "How does that COG contribute to achieving our strategic objective?" Planners proficient with strategic attack methods will rapidly focus IPB and PBA efforts on the appropriate strategic environment, providing maximum time for research and analysis.

Of course, there is no free lunch. The ability to apply the new definition of strategic attack will require planners to have a working knowledge of a variety of "warwinning" philosophies. This means there must be an emphasis on teaching planners to use the current models and theories and reinforcing that knowledge throughout the education and training process. The merits of strategic attack must be emphasized from accession through all levels of

professional military education to include *joint* professional military education. Potential planners must review and understand the historical applications of strategic attack and take advantage of the operational lessons learned. Most importantly, strategic attack planning and execution must be integrated, tested, and evaluated in exercises, experiments, and wargames.

Strategic attack is one tool that provides the United States military with a chance to preserve lives and treasure while maximizing limited resources. This country is facing a wide variety of threats for which nothing in the past has prepared it, but properly developed strategic attacks take advantage of one of the greatest strengths of American people--creativity. Americans have never limited themselves to the status quo and with national security and the future of freedom on the line--now is not the time to begin.

The new definition "Offensive action conducted by command authorities aimed at generating effects that most directly achieve national security objectives by affecting an adversary's leadership, conflict-sustaining resources, and/or strategy" may be the best start ever toward establishing an approach that can stand the test of time.

Notes

¹ Jane Plotke, World War I Document Archive-Conventions and Treaties, March 2002, n.p., on-line, Internet, 15 December 2002, available from <http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/treaties.html>

² Peter Paret (ed.) *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), 24, and JP 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, 10 September 2001, I-3

³ Panel consisted of SECAF James Roche, CSAF Gen John Jumper and four star generals: Gen Lester Lyles, AMC; Gen Gregory Martin, USAFE; Gen John Handy, AMC; Gen Hal Hornburg, ACC; Gen William Begert, PACAF; and Gen Donald Cook, AETC.

⁴ Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996, 1 and Gary Schaub, Jr., "Compellence: Resuscitating the Concept," in *Strategic Coercion: Concepts and Cases*, ed. Lawrence Freedman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 33. In terms of pros and cons, Pape and Schaub have done research in these areas. Robert Pape says, "...I maintain that coercion, at least in conventional wars, succeeds when force is used to exploit the opponent's military vulnerabilities, thereby making it infeasible for the opponent to achieve its political goals by continued military efforts." Gary Schaub, on the issue of compellence, writes "Once it has actually been employed, military power tends to harden attitudes...with more violence, compromise becomes harder."

⁵ The words "conducted by command authorities" and the word "and" were added at the outbrief based on discussion among the SECAF, CSAF, and General officers present.

⁶ CSAF Symposium, Strategic Attack panel, 8-12 April 2002, Montgomery AL

⁷ *Effects Based Operations White Paper*, Headquarters Air Combat Command, Plans and Policy, (ACC/XP), May 2002

⁸ Francis Ford Coppola, U.S. film director, writer, Edmund H. North, screenwriter, and Franklin J. Schaffner. General George S. Patton Jr. (George C. Scott), in Patton (film), opening speech in which General Patton addresses the audience as though they were his troops (1970).

⁹ Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Glossary

¹⁰ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), 87

¹¹ Ibid, Glossary

¹² JP 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, xiii-xiv

¹³ *National Security Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2002), 30

¹⁴ Alan J. Stephenson, "Shades of Gray: Gradual Escalation and Coercive Diplomacy", *Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategy Essay Competition: Essays 2002* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2002), 13

¹⁵ Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War*, (New York: PublicAffairs Press, 2001), 326

¹⁶ Samuel B. Griffith, *Sun Tzu: The Art of War*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 41

¹⁷ Clausewitz, *On War*, 82

¹⁸ Thomas Hughes, "The Cult of the Quick," *Aerospace Power Journal*, (Winter 2001) n.p., on-line, Internet, 5 September 2002, available from <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicals/apj/apj01/win01/hughes.html>.

¹⁹ JP 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, 10 September 2001, II-2

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²⁰ Department Of The Navy -- Naval Historical Center, "The Joint Chiefs of Staff Meet with General MacArthur, August 1950" 10 October 1999, n.p., on-line, Internet, 12 July 2002, available from <http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/events/kowar/comnd/cmd50-2.htm>

²¹ Department Of The Navy -- Naval Historical Center, "The Inchon Invasion, September 1950 -- Overview and Selected Images" 10 October 1999, n.p., on-line, Internet, 12 July 2002, available from (<http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/events/kowar/50-unof/inchon.htm>)

²² "Israel War and Maps" on-line, Internet, 1 December 2002, available from http://www.unitedjerusalem.com/HISTORICAL_PERSPECTIVES/Israel_Wars_Maps____History/israel_wars_maps____history.asp

²³ Rebecca Grant, "The Bekaa Valley War" *Air Force Magazine*, 85, no 06 (June 2002): n.p., on-line, Internet, 1 December 2002, available from <http://www.afa.org/magazine/June2002/0602bekaa.asp>

²⁴ Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, 312

²⁵ Ibid., 316

²⁶ Ibid., 296

²⁷ "Pearl Harbor Remembered—December 7, 1941" 7 July 2001, n.p., on-line, Internet, 1 December 2002, available from <http://my.execpc.com/~dschaaf/overview.html>

²⁸ Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, 708

²⁹ John Pike, *Global Security*, "Operation El Dorado Canyon" 15 June 2002, n.p., Internet, 1 December 2002, available from http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/el_dorado_canyon.htm

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Gary Endersby, "Strategic Operations" Draft Strategic Operations White Paper, Center for Advanced Doctrine, Research, and Education, 2002

³² JP 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, vii

³³ Grant, "The Bekaa Valley War" on-line

Appendix A

Current Published Strategic Attack Definitions

AFDD 1, Basic Doctrine (September 1997). Strategic attack is defined as those operations intended to directly achieve strategic effects by striking at the enemy's COGs. These operations are designed to achieve their objectives without first having to necessarily engage the adversary's fielded military forces in extended operations at the operational and tactical levels of war.

AFDD 2-1.2, Strategic Attack (20 May 1998). Strategic attack is defined as those operations intended to directly achieve strategic effects by striking directly at the enemy's centers of gravity (COGs). These operations are designed to achieve their objectives without first having to directly engage the adversary's fielded military forces in extended operations at the operational and tactical levels of war.

Joint Pub 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations (10 September 2001). The combatant commander should consider conducting joint strategic attacks when feasible. A joint strategic attack is a combatant commander directed offensive action against a vital target(s), whether military, political, economic, or other, that is specifically selected in order to achieve NCA or combatant commander's strategic objectives. These attacks seek to weaken the adversary's ability or will to engage in conflict or continue an action and as such, could be part of a campaign, major operation, or conducted independently as directed the NCA. Additionally, these attacks may directly or indirectly achieve strategic objectives without necessarily having to achieve operational objectives as a precondition. These targets may include but are not limited to enemy strategic COGs. All components of a joint force may have capabilities to conduct joint strategic attacks.

Joint Pub 3-70, Joint Strategic Attack (under development). Identical to JP 3-0 definition. The definition currently in Joint Pub 3-0 was originally proposed for this document. The Joint Doctrine Working Party (JDWP) made the decision to put the proposed definition in JP 3-0 with the intention to eliminate JP 3-70. As of this writing, however, JP 3-70 has been approved for development.

Appendix B

Considerations for Planning a Strategic Attack

- A) Gather intelligence on adversary
 - 1) Strengths
 - 2) Vulnerabilities
 - 3) Goals/Objectives
 - 4) Strategy
- B) Analyze organizational structure
 - 1) Analytical Tools
 - a) Strange's Centers of Gravity
 - b) Warden's Five Rings
 - 2) Philosophical theories
 - a) effects based operations
 - b) network centric warfare
- C) Develop Strategy
 - 1) Request/clarify National/Strategic objectives
 - 2) Request/clarify Operational objectives
 - 3) Select "targetable" vulnerabilities
 - 4) Establish sequence of events
 - 5) Wargame
- D) Present Courses of Action for approval
 - 1) Joint Force Commander and staff
 - 2) President/Secretary of Defense/National Security Advisors
- E) Execute Courses of Action as approved
 - 1) Sequentially
 - 2) Simultaneously
- F) Assess results
 - 1) Operational
 - 2) Strategic
- G) Adapt

Appendix C

Planning Models¹

In addition to emerging concepts, such as Effects Based Operations and Network Centric Warfare which may prove useful in building a strategic attack, there are a number of planning models available for use in creating a strategic attack plan. The models presented here are Dr Strange's Center of Gravity Model, Col Wardens Five Rings, and Maj Barlow's Net Elements of Value. This is not an exhaustive list by any means, but is representative of some of the tools available. During the planning stage, any or all of these may be used to develop a strategic attack plan. Subgroups within the planning cell might work each model independently and compare results. The comparison might yield commonalities that help focus the plan. Using these models to analyze the adversary helps to identify specific targets and provides a construct that leads to an understanding of the enemy as a system of interrelated systems. Additionally, it provides a basis for further analysis to identify those items most valued by the adversary. These models are also applicable in the event there is no "national" structure. They are as useful against non-nation states as they are against full functioning governments. COG identification and analysis are difficult but critical aspects of effects-based operations. Every adversary has COGs regardless of societal structure or national determination. There are two models based on the COG concept that could be extremely useful in the planning of strategic attacks—Dr Strange's CG-CC-CR-CV model and Col Warden's Five Rings.

Dr Joe Strange's Center of Gravity model²

Dr Strange's Center of Gravity model isolates the Critical Vulnerabilities that will lead to ultimate destruction of the associated COG. By working through this construct, the planner can identify the leadership, conflict-sustaining resources, and/or strategies upon which continued hostile enemy action depend. Dr. Strange's model consists of four distinct categories.

Centers of Gravity (COG) - Primary sources of moral or physical strength, power and resistance.

Critical Capabilities (CC) - Primary abilities which qualify a Center of Gravity to be identified as such in the context of a given scenario, situation, or mission.

Critical Requirements (CR) - Essential conditions, resources and means for a Critical Capability to be fully operative.

Critical Vulnerabilities (CV) - Critical Requirements or components thereof which are deficient, or vulnerable to neutralization, interdiction or attack (moral/physical harm) in a manner achieving decisive results--the smaller the resources and effort applied, and the smaller the risk and cost, the better.

Figure 1 demonstrates how Dr Strange's model might be applied to an analysis of Osama Bin Laden and the al-Qaeda organization³.

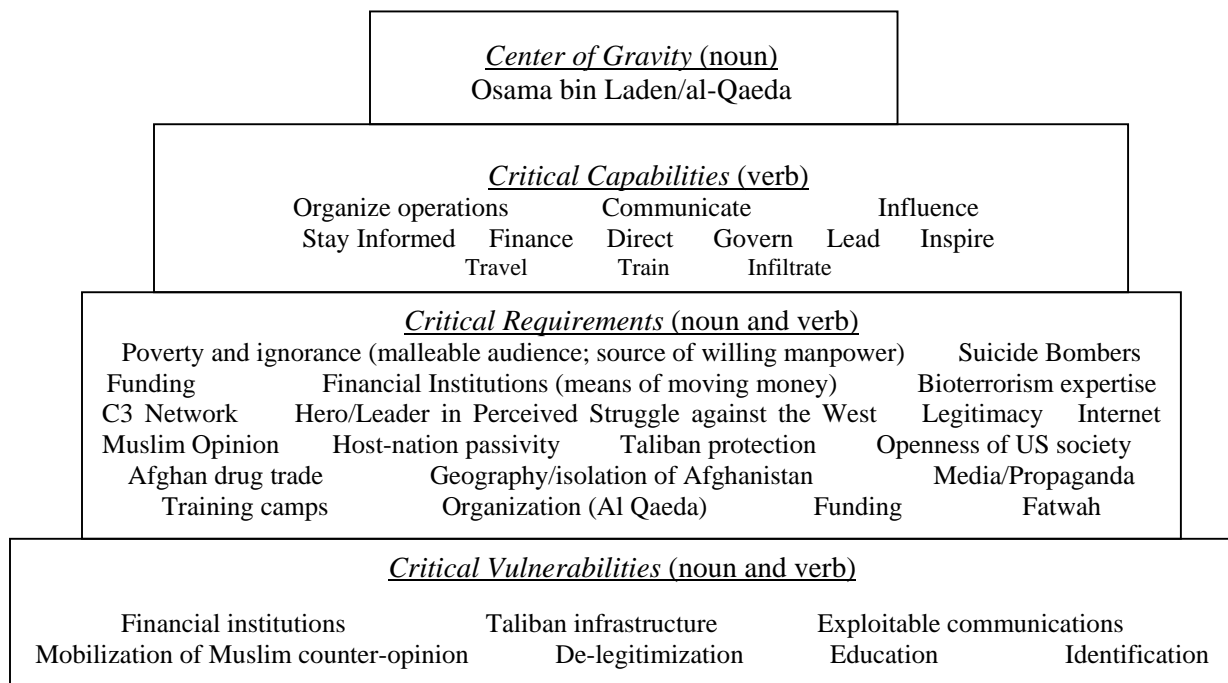


Figure 1. EXAMPLE USING STRANGE'S COG ANALYSIS MODEL

Col John Wardens' Five Rings⁴

Warden's COG Analysis model is used for target set analysis. It models the enemy as five concentric circles. The innermost circle represents leadership. Moving outward, the rings indicate system essentials, infrastructure, population, and fielded forces. Each circle has its own set of concentric circles that expands to reveal more detail as the system is further disaggregated. The initial set of rings constitutes the enemy's COGs. The sub rings are called "target systems" and are further broken down into "target sets," which are used to identify specific targets.

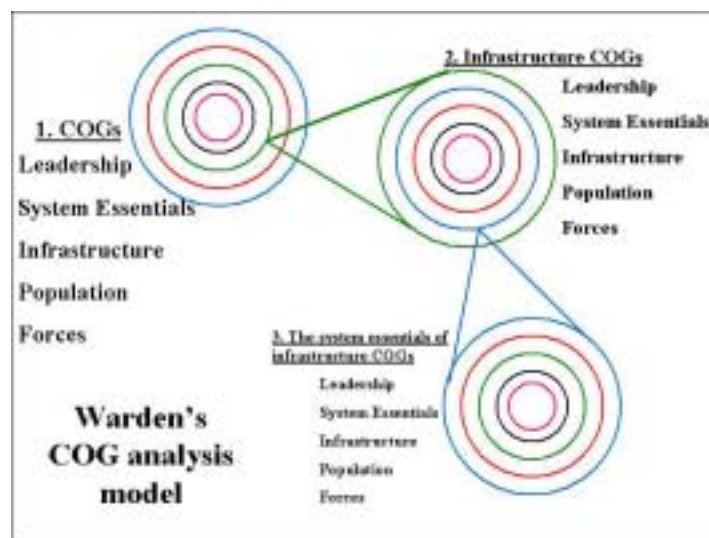


Figure 2. WARDEN'S COG ANALYSIS MODEL

Commanders need to conduct a risk analysis to compare the benefits of attacking a COG to the possible loss of the strategic attack assets. The operational risk management process is useful for that purpose. The six steps are: identifying the threat to the mission; assessing the risks; analyzing risk control measures; making control decisions; implementing risk controls; and supervising and reviewing. Based on all the information available and their own experience, commanders should make a judgment about the potential benefits and cost of a particular course of action. Commanders can employ risk control measures such as electronic warfare capabilities to reduce operational risk and increase survivability of weapon systems and personnel.

Major Jason Barlow's National Elements of Value (NEV) With Interlinking and Variable Lines of Influence Model⁵

Jason Barlow's National Elements of Values (NEV) model weighs both the importance of the NEV and the links between the NEVs. The size of each ball reflects relative importance to the adversary, while the thickness of the lines connecting the spheres reflects the importance of the relationship between the two connected spheres.

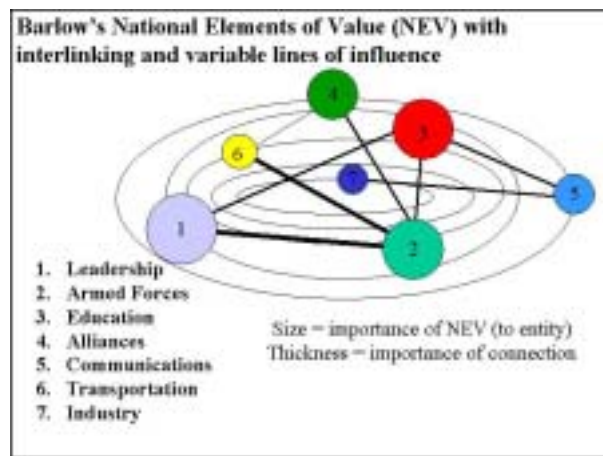


Figure 3. BARLOW'S NEV MODEL

Notes

¹ Entire section is based on information from the EBO White Paper, JFCOM J9, Oct 2001

² Strange, Joseph L., *Perspectives on Warfighting* Number Four, 2 ed., Marine Corps University Foundation, Quantico, VA, 1996

³ Air Force Doctrine Center Working Group product, October 2001

⁴ EBO White Paper, JFCOM J9, Oct 2001

⁵ EBO White Paper, JFCOM J9, Oct 2001

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